

and we expect to see you again next year.

Mr. President, we joke a little bit about this, but I think some of the most pleasant moments that I spent this year have been watching the softball team play—pleasant, because I know how hard the men and women who work for the Senate, who support all of us, do work, Republicans and Democrats alike. It is the men and women here who so make the Senate the place it is and can be. And they are the ones who make it possible for Americans to have hope in us.

There are 100 Senators. None of us would be able to do our job without people, ranging from those who guard the doors of this Chamber to those who report our proceedings, to those who handle the bills as they go through, and to all the others—those who make the electricity work, to those who help us write the legislation. I sometimes joke we are merely constitutional impediments to the staff. The truth of the matter is, we are, all of us, better—Republicans and Democrats alike—because of the selfless work of the men and women here in the Senate.

When I see them have a chance to play softball and enjoy themselves, I think how lucky we are to have them here. I have to tell all those in my office, I could not be more proud than I was watching them play in these championship games.

Mr. President, I see the distinguished Senator from Mississippi on the floor. When I started speaking there was nobody seeking recognition. He is the manager of this bill. Is he seeking recognition? If not, I have one more item to go to.

Mr. COCHRAN. No. Please proceed.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET SUMMIT NEEDED NOW

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago I called for a summit between Congressional leaders and the President to avoid a Government shutdown when the next fiscal year starts on October 1.

Since then, the House and Senate have passed a couple more appropriations bills and the administration has threatened more vetoes.

I was encouraged, however, by last week's meeting between congressional leaders and the President that we may yet avoid a budget train wreck which will force the Government to shutdown. The President and congressional leaders were right to get together to discuss a continuing resolution to fund the Government beyond October 1.

I hope last week's meeting signals a start to rational negotiations to solve the current budget impasse. We need to build on the positive signals sent by both sides to reach a compromise.

That is why I renew my call for a bipartisan summit now—before the budget crisis. We need to sit down now to hammer out our differences.

Resolving differences is the essence of governing. Let us get together, the

leaders of both parties, and work together to make our Government work.

I fear that few of our leaders have considered what happens if Congress and the President fail to reach an agreement and force the Government to shut down. Make no mistake about it—shutting down the Government will bring serious consequences.

First, shutting down the Government because Democrats and Republicans cannot agree on the budget will accomplish nothing except adding more scorn of our political system. This partisan fighting for just the sake of a headline is exactly what Vermonters believe is wrong with our present system. I believe this scorn will be fully justified if we do not work out our differences before forcing the Government to close.

Second, and more importantly, shutting down the Government will have serious effects on the lives of millions of Americans.

The most immediate effect of a shutdown will be the furloughing of Federal employees. The only exceptions from furloughs under a Government shutdown are Presidential appointees, uniformed military personnel, and Federal civilian employees rated "essential."

In 1990, the nonpartisan General Accounting Office estimated that 319,541 Federal Government employees out of 741,653 would be furloughed—about 43 percent of the Federal Government work force—during a Government shutdown.

Imagine the effect on those hundreds of thousands of employees and their families who are facing the prospect of an unknown period of unemployment. These are hard-working people who struggle like millions of other Americans to balance their checkbook each month.

We should not hold their households hostage to our inability to provide a workable Government budget for all Americans.

So let us keep in mind that when we contemplate a shutdown, we are talking about punishing hard-working families, not faceless bureaucrats, as some would lead us to believe.

What would be the effects if 43% of our Government workers are not allowed to go to work?

The GAO surveyed Government agencies in 1990 to find out the answer to that question. Each agency estimated that a Government shutdown would severely damage their effectiveness.

The Environmental Protection Agency, for example, estimated that "all environmental protection services would be shutdown." Do we really want to leave our environment at risk to score political points over a Government shutdown?

The Food and Drug Administration estimated under a shutdown "there would be no work on applications for new drugs and devices." Do we really want to put the benefits of new science and technology on hold to score political points over a Government shutdown?

The Social Security Administration estimated that under a shutdown "no new applications for Social Security or Medicare eligibility would be taken or inquiries answered."

Do we really want to make our senior citizens wait to score political points over a Government shutdown?

The Department of Justice estimated that a shutdown would delay trials and weaken its ability to supervise the Federal parolee caseload. Do we really want to slow down our criminal justice system to score political points over a Government shutdown?

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that under a shutdown "there would be approximately 37,000 unanswered telephone calls per day and approximately 5,000 cancelled interviews per day." Do our veterans really deserve this kind of treatment to score political points over a Government shutdown?

Perhaps the most lasting effect of a Government shutdown will be the wasted millions of taxpayer dollars.

At a time when the President and Congress are dedicated to eliminating unnecessary Government spending, pouring money down a Government shutdown rathole makes absolutely no sense. Shutting down the Government will make it harder to balance the budget—not easier—because lost revenue from a shutdown will simply add to our deficit.

The GAO estimated in its 1990 report that a 3-day closing would cost the Government millions of revenue dollars.

The Interior Department, for example, would lose \$30 million in revenue during a 3-day shutdown, and the Treasury Department would lose a whopping \$420 million. A longer shutdown would lose millions more. Do we really want to waste taxpayer money to score political points over a Government shutdown?

Closing the Government, even for a short time, carries serious consequences. It would rightfully heap scorn on our political system.

It would impair the effectiveness of necessary Government services, which many Americans depend on every day. And it would waste millions of taxpayer dollars.

Let us stop this fiscal insanity. Let us build on last week's bipartisan meeting and call a bipartisan budget summit.

It is time for our leaders to start acting responsibly. It is time for our leaders to start using some common sense. It is time for a bipartisan summit on the budget.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I understand that we have some amendments that have been offered and are pending now on this agriculture appropriations bill which is the business before the Senate.

AMENDMENT NO. 2686

One of these amendments that was set aside for debate for later today was one offered by the distinguished Democratic leader in behalf of Senators KERREY and KOHL. That amendment would strike a provision of the bill that was added as a committee amendment appropriating funds for use as disaster assistance to supplement the benefits provided by catastrophic insurance to disaster victims. The reason the committee approved this amendment was because we have seen throughout the South this year some very serious damage in the cotton fields of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, Tennessee, and Arkansas as well.

As a result of massive infestations of tobacco bud worms and beet army worms, and other pests in the cotton crops in these States, it has been hard to estimate the exact amount of damage done because harvesting has not occurred in many of the areas where we know the devastation is severe. So dollar amounts are simply estimates at this point. But one estimate that we saw in my State of Mississippi alone indicates that over 160,000 acres of cotton have been damaged at a loss of over \$100 million.

The reason the committee thought it was important to provide some additional benefits is that the catastrophic crop disaster insurance program is not sufficient to help farmers in this situation. And many of them are not going to be able to plant crops next year, and some are not going to be able to stay in business unless something is done to help them.

We have already seen this last week a request from the Governor of Mississippi transmitted to Secretary of Agriculture Glickman asking for disaster declarations in many of these counties in our State which will make available emergency production loans. These loans will be at reduced rates of interest—I am told at about 3.75 percent interest—and would be available as emergency loan benefits, if the damage assessment reports justify the declaration and approval of the declaration by the Secretary of Agriculture.

One difficulty that we are encountering, though, is that the early estimates are proving to be much less than what the damages are turning out to be because of these massive infestations of pests.

It is certainly a concern to me that the Senators from Nebraska and Wisconsin are urging the Senate to overturn this provision in our bill. We had hoped that the Senate and the House also would respond to this crisis situation and be generous—as generous as

the budget permits and as generous as our rules permit—to provide some additional assistance to these disaster victims.

I am urging the Senate to approve the committee amendment that provides this crop disaster assistance money. The Senate should also know that I have introduced separate legislation to authorize the Secretary, if he deems that additional disaster assistance is justified, to ask for additional appropriations.

That legislation has been introduced here in the Senate. It has been introduced in the House in the companion bill which is sponsored by Congressman ROGER WICKER and Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON of Mississippi. Our entire delegation was invited to a meeting at the offices of the Mississippi Farm Bureau federation in August to hear firsthand the reports of cotton producers and those who were familiar with the situation—immunologists, an economist from the Mississippi Extension Service at Mississippi State University who was familiar with the facts. And, after hearing all of the information, it became very clear to me that we needed to respond both here in Washington and at every level of government to try to help overcome the effects of this serious disaster.

It is one of those situations where it appeared that we were going to have a very good and productive cotton crop throughout the country this year. But all of a sudden, because of the excessive hot weather, hotter than usual, dryer than usual, and an enormous infestation of these insects and pests that almost overnight the complexion of the cotton crop this year was changed. Producers began trying to find out what kinds of control measures could be effective to deal with this problem. Some of them spent huge amounts on chemical applications that they were told by experts could help deal with this disaster only to find out that the money was really wasted. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent by many farmers in our State to try to deal with and control these pests. And much of that money has been wasted.

There are many cotton fields in our State which will not even have a cotton picker put in the fields. They will not even try to harvest the cotton because it is just not there to pick. So total losses in many of our counties have been sustained.

I am going to ask, Mr. President, to put in the RECORD an estimate that has been compiled from various sources, including the Mississippi Department of Agriculture, the Texas Extension Service, the Alabama Extension Service, and the National Cotton Council. The States of Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama are covered in this report.

I ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, that this estimate of cotton losses due to the tobacco bud worm be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COTTON LOSSES DUE TO THE TOBACCO BUDWORM

State	Acres— Abandoned and reduced yield	Loss in mil- lions of dol- lars
Mississippi	160,000	100
Texas (in lower Rio Grand and southern Rolling Plains)	500,000	200–400
Alabama	400,000	155
Tennessee	150,000	50–75
Arkansas	100,000	20
Georgia	300,000	75
North Carolina		Negligible
South Carolina		Negligible

Sources: Mississippi: MS Department of Agriculture; Texas: Texas Extension Service; Alabama: Auburn Extension Service; Tennessee: National Cotton Council; Arkansas: National Cotton Council; North Carolina: National Cotton Council; South Carolina: National Cotton Council; and Georgia: National Cotton Council.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, the estimates not only identify the acreage that has been abandoned and which will have reduced yields due to this infestation, but also the translation in losses in terms of millions of dollars in my State of Mississippi. It is a \$100 million estimate. But just this week, when I was home in Mississippi this weekend, the newspaper carried a story with new crop loss estimates that have been compiled from throughout the South. It shows that even higher estimates than had earlier been expected are now justified on the basis of the losses that are occurring.

We have on our hands, Mr. President, one of the worst disasters in the cotton industry that anyone can remember. Our committee decided that it would be important to make available some additional funds which the Secretary of Agriculture could use to supplement the benefits of the Catastrophic Crop Insurance Program.

The Catastrophic Crop Insurance Program is a new program. Farmers were told, when this program was approved, that it would be a substitute for the usual disaster assistance benefits that have occasionally been made available when disasters struck the agriculture sector, and that the amounts of the benefits would be about the same that they would normally get; to qualify for the catastrophic crop insurance, you would be charged \$50, and that would be a processing fee.

I remember when I first heard about it, I said to the Department of Agriculture people who were briefing us, "That's too good to be true—\$50. You buy this insurance and it provides the same benefits that the Federal Government has been making available as disaster benefits on an ad hoc basis when they thought it was justified." I was assured that is what the promise was.

What has happened, as we get down to the real details and we find out what the benefits are of this so-called Catastrophic Crop Insurance Program, we are finding out it does not provide the same coverage that historic disaster assistance programs have provided.

Previous disaster programs traditionally provided coverage at 60 percent of

historic yields at 65 percent of the market price. This new catastrophic coverage is 50 percent of historic yield at 60 percent of the market price.

That may not sound like a great deal of difference, but it is. It is a substantially different program that is now being made available to disaster victims.

I know that one reason for the change and one reason for the adoption of the new Crop Insurance Program was to provide a predictable level of benefit when an agriculture disaster struck, and if farmers were not satisfied that that was enough, they would be encouraged thereby to buy additional coverage. They would buy up to another level of protection on their own. But a lot of farmers have not done that, for varying reasons. Some misunderstood the benefit package that catastrophic insurance provided; some were, frankly, convinced that the additional insurance was too expensive for what they would probably get from it as benefits; and there may have been other reasons. There has always been a question about how the yields are calculated and whether the yields were too high or too low, whether they were individual yields or countywide basis yields. There have been a lot of problems with crop insurance, and everybody knows that.

I raise this issue now, and I know it will be debated later by those who are trying to strike this money from the bill, so Senators will be on notice that we are probably going to have to vote on this amendment. Unlike other disasters that have been occasioned by flood or bad weather, this is a disaster that actually resulted in farmers going out and spending money to try to prevent it on their own, trying to apply what they hoped would be new chemicals that were promised to work and did not or did not work well enough to justify the enormous expenses that farmers went to to protect themselves.

Here they were. It was just weeks away from these bolls ripening and producing the cotton for harvest when they noticed that these bolls were being infested with bud worms and army worms and other pests.

One part of the story is good news, and that is that in many parts of our State, the delta region particularly, the cotton had gotten to the stage of development where it was not affected by the worms, and so we are not talking about every area of our State being equally devastated by this problem. But we do have many areas of our State where there are total losses and many areas where the yields are not nearly what they were expected to be. It is disheartening and it truly is a disaster of enormous proportions. So I hope the Senators who are resisting this effort to provide additional assistance will reconsider.

The amount of money in the bill for this purpose is about \$40 million, and Senator KERREY's amendment will strike that money. We hope that the Senate will vote against it.

I am going to ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, to put in the RECORD some additional supporting documentation on this, specifically an article that I talked about that was in the paper this weekend which more clearly describes the seriousness of the situation and the enormous losses that are occurring in Mississippi and elsewhere as a result of this cotton crop disaster.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Clarion-Ledger, Sept. 17, 1995]

GROWERS PICK TOUGH YEAR FOR MORE COTTON

STARKVILLE.—Cotton yields will not be what many growers dreamed of when they increased Mississippi's crop by 100,000 acres to take advantage of stronger prices.

Higher than normal insect pressure and excessive heat have taken their toll.

"Preliminary yields do not look good," said Will McCarty, extension cotton specialist at Mississippi State University.

The Sept. 1 crop report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture brought bleak news on the expectations for Mississippi's crop.

"The September report estimates 480,000 fewer bales of cotton for Mississippi than the August report predicted," McCarty said. "The pounds per acre expectation dropped 158 pounds. I can't remember the crop reporting service ever dropping us that much in one month."

The cotton specialist said the news could get worse as the season finishes.

"There is no doubt that the severe, continuous heat in July, August and early September has taken a heavy toll on the crop," McCarty said.

Blake Layton, extension entomologist at MSU, said the state had faced the risk of catastrophic tobacco budworm numbers for several years because of high levels of insecticide resistance.

"The extremely high numbers in 1995 turned that risk into reality," Layton said. "This risk will exist again next year because we still will have problems with insecticide resistance. Severe winter temperatures will help reduce the danger."

The entomologist said because of the cyclic nature of these insects next year hopefully will be less severe.

"We seldom have two back-to-back years of insect populations at these levels of a pest like this," he said.

Layton said natural predators and parasites increase with high numbers of an insect and help knock the numbers back down. He said the damage to the 1995 crop is done. Growers are no longer applying insecticides as the tobacco budworms prepare to overwinter in the ground.

In Forest County, where cotton is a new crop, growers are anxious to harvest and see the bottom line.

"We're one of the few counties that haven't had tobacco budworm problems, but we've had everything else—bollworms, beet armyworms, yellow-striped armyworms and even loopers," said Lee Taylor, Forest County agricultural agent. "Last fall's eradication efforts helped keep boll weevils from becoming a factor this year."

Taylor said growers turned to cotton as marketing of soybeans and corn became less attractive. He said 1995 has been a good year for cotton.

Otis Davis, Madison County agent, said growers began harvesting cotton slightly earlier because of the dry conditions. The drought is causing lighter seeds and smaller bolls.

"Insects were a tremendous expense to growers throughout Madison County," Davis said. "Cotton prices probably will entice growers to return to cotton again next year."

Growers throughout the southeast continue to await word on disaster assistance from the federal and state governments as a result of tobacco budworm damage.

Mr. INHOFE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to address the Senate as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INDEPENDENT STATUS FOR THE FAA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, last month I introduced a bill that would give the FAA independent status. As a matter of fact, when I introduced it, I read a speech as if I were giving it. It was really a speech that was given 20 years ago by Barry Goldwater, and Barry Goldwater's speech was a lengthy one, one that outlined the problems in 1975 that had occurred since the FAA had gone under the Department of Transportation back in 1967. He talked about the procurement problems and the personnel problems that are very unique to the FAA.

Oddly enough, it was 20 years ago that Barry Goldwater made that speech, and I talked to him the other day and he said, "I hope we will be able to do it now."

I am talking about a life-and-death issue as a commercial pilot, I guess the last active commercial pilot in Congress. I have experienced having our lives in the hands of those controllers down there, and it is very significant that we do give them the independent status that Barry Goldwater was seeking back in 1975.

I really believe if we could do that, we could effect enough savings to actually prevent having to raise fees and having to raise taxes as is being considered right now in another bill, and as also is being suggested by the President.

On August 9, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee made a statement in the Chamber, and he said, "The FAA tells us if they could have this kind of operational flexibility"—now we are talking about independent status, free from the bureaucracy of the DOT, free from the procurement guidelines and the personnel guidelines—"they believe they could cut as much as 20 percent out of the procurement budget" from what they are spending today.

Now, this is significant because that happens to be approximately the amount that historically has been contributed to the FAA for operations from the general revenues. And I suggest to you that my bill does not give